

The danger is that, as the federal budget is cut to eliminate the deficit by 2002, pressure to shift the costs of favored government programs off-budget to the private sector will mount.

For example, advocates of a new federal job training program could propose funding it through a Department of Labor appropriation, or alternatively, through a new mandate that all Fortune 500 firms provide such training. The first appears on the budget, the second does not.

With the "Mandates Information Act of 1997," Sen. Abraham and Rep. Gary Condit, D-Calif., hope to remedy today's absence of disclosure and regulatory bias. They hope to ensure that mandates imposing higher wages, increasing unemployment, or increasing consumer prices shall no longer slip through Congress unacknowledged.

Their proposal would work by extending certain provisions of the 104th Congress' popular Unfunded Mandates Act to remove the arbitrary distinction between public and private sector mandates.

The Mandates Information Act would allow a single Senator or House member to raise a point of order against any private sector mandate costing over \$100 million annually. The point of order would halt further floor action until members vote specifically to waive it.

Making Congress explicitly vote on its intent to impose a burden in this fashion wouldn't necessarily stop any mandate. But it would allow constituents to determine where their representative stood on a particular mandate.

Cost estimates would be prepared by the Congressional Budget Office prior to floor consideration for any bill reported out of committee, and disclosed in a document, called a "Consumer Worker, and Small Business Impact Statement."

The statement would include mandate impact estimates on consumer prices and actual supply of goods and service in consumer markets; wages, benefits and employment opportunities; the hiring practices, expansion, and profitability of businesses with 100 or fewer employees.

Knowing such impacts is worthwhile. Sen. Abraham points out that mandates not only result in workers losing jobs, they can prevent job formation in the first place. Mandates mount as a small firm grows; for example, at 15 employees, mandatory compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act kicks in; at 25, the Health Maintenance Organization Act does; at 50, the Family and Medical Leave Act applies.

Sen. Abraham cites the case of Hasselbring-Clark, an office equipment supply firm in Lansing, Mich. Its treasurer Noelle Clark says, given the additional mandates that would otherwise apply, "we have hired a few temps to stay under 49 (employees)."

Since the Abraham-Condit bill merely calls for disclosure, it should stand above criticism from advocates of government-regulation; if the majority believes it worthwhile to pass a mandate in the first place, enough votes to override the simply majority point of order ought to be there as well.

The point of order enforcement mechanism for high-dollar rules and the impact statement together could help make Congress far more answerable for excessive mandates. That could be the lasting innovation of the Mandates Information Act.

While most regulatory reforms attempt merely to require agencies to police themselves better through cost-benefit analysis, Sen. Abraham and Rep. Condit are bringing the focus back to the real source of excessive lawmaking: Congress.●

TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW ELMER TREAMER AND CHRIS DEMERS FOR RECEIVING THE 1996 PRESIDENTIAL AWARD IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE TRAINING

● Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Matthew Elmer Tremer, a teacher at Lancaster School in Lancaster NH and Chris Demers, a teacher at Dr. H.O. Smith School in Hudson NH, on receiving the 1996 Presidential Award in Mathematics and Science Training. Matthew and Chris will spend the week of June 10-14 in Washington, DC, for a series of events to commemorate their distinguished selection.

As a former teacher myself, I commend their outstanding accomplishment and well-deserved honor.

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Training Program, administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF), is designed to recognize and reward outstanding teachers who serve as models for their colleagues. Matthew and Chris have been leaders in the areas of increased visibility and rewards. This award recognizes their distinguished leadership, and encourages high quality teachers to enter and remain in the teaching field.

New Hampshire has always been fortunate to have many talented teachers, but Matthew and Chris are certainly role models among the teachers of the Granite State. I am proud of their dedication to the education of New Hampshire children and congratulate them on this magnificent achievement. It is an honor to represent them in the U.S. Senate.●

MEASURE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 1000

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I understand that H.R. 1000 has arrived from the House, and I would ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1000) to require States to establish a system to prevent prisoners from being considered part of any household for purposes of determining eligibility of the household for food stamp benefits and the amount of food stamp benefits to be provided to the household under the Food Stamp Act of 1977.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I now ask for its second reading, and object to my own request on behalf of the other side of the aisle.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will remain at the desk and will receive its next reading on the next legislative day.

MEASURE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 908

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I understand that H.R. 908 has arrived from the House, and I ask for its first reading on behalf of the other side of the aisle.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows.

A bill (H.R. 908) to establish a Commission on Structural Alternatives for the Federal Courts of Appeals.

Mr. ASHCROFT. I would now ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will remain at the desk and will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 1997

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today it stand in adjournment until the hour of 11 a.m. on Tuesday, June 10. I further ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, immediately following the prayer, the routine requests through the morning hour be granted and the Senate then be in a period of morning business until the hour of 12:30 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes with the following exceptions: Senator MURKOWSKI, 20 minutes; Senator HARKIN, 30 minutes; Senator BIDEN, 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess from the hours of 12:30 until 2:15 on Tuesday for the weekly policy conferences to meet.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, tomorrow from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. the Senate will be in a period of morning business to accommodate a number of Senators who have requested time to speak. By previous consent, from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m., the Senate will be in recess to allow the weekly policy luncheons to meet. Following the luncheons, the Senate may begin consideration of S. 419, the Birth Defects Prevention Act. Therefore, Senators can expect rollcall votes throughout tomorrow's session of the Senate. As always, Members will be notified accordingly as any votes are ordered with respect to any legislation cleared for action.

I thank Members for their attention.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:15 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, June 10, 1997, at 11 a.m.